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17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS) The educative process should aid the migrant children to live a fuller life in relation to their potential and should contain broader and less restrictive patterns of cultural expectancies. Although academic knowledge is essential, a more prominent place must be assigned to areas of knowledge related to comprehension of culturally inspired responses. Practices to promote the kind of learning that relates to cultural expectancies and to promote the abilities to respond adequately in human interrelationships should be utilized. Class size should be reduced to fifteen, therefore allowing for individualization. Teachers should be competent in all subjects within a range of at least two grades above and below the assigned grade; total departmentalization should be avoided at least into seventh grade. In order to develop the will to continue education, a self-contained classroom is recommended. Another practice is experiential learning, in which children are helped to understand certain meanings and concepts by enlisting their active participation in demonstrations of the concept being learned, e.g. field trips.							
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"Education of the Migrant Child"
 Dr. Alfred M. Potts
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With my two colleagues I am happy to welcome each of you to our scenic Rocky Mountain state. Colorado people are always glad to exchange experiences with others who might benefit by our trials and tribulations. And we seek to learn from your wide backgrounds, and the findings from experiments you conduct.

Approaching this subject of the education of the migrant child, with emphasis on improved practices of instruction, prompts me to recall an incident I witnessed in my boyhood. Sitting on the corral fence of a livery stable I watched a city man trying to get a horse and buggy together for a trip to a neighboring town. Things just weren't working out for him. A farm hand called through the gate "If'n you put that horse, harness, and buggy together right he'll git you to whar you're goin'!"

Sometimes, about migrant education, I wonder "if'n" we put the horse, the harness, and the buggy "together right" - and also if we actually know where it is we want to go.

This prompts the raising of some vital questions that must be answered before we can get to the matter of improving practices that will facilitate the learning process for the migrant child. First, do we know what realistic goals we, with the children, should attempt to attain? May I suggest a brief response to this question. Generally speaking, we assume these goals to be the same as the broadly accepted statements that are common goals for all of American public education. Now, let us assume that certain portions of migrant children can be kept in

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school throughout the first six grades - even if completion of six grades requires eight or nine years - the more persevering youngsters can be prepared to relate in academic, social and cultural achievement, reasonably well to the youngsters of the common population. These migrant children then, conditions permitting, are ready to profit through the remainder of the 12 grades as are many other children.

But, consider the migrant child who enters school at six, seven, or eight years of age with what we rather glibly refer to as "unreadiness" - what does this mean? It means he has very little ability in oral communication; he has mastery of very, very few words - perhaps only one or two hundred and quite unsatisfactory understanding of a few more. The true semantic meanings of many words, as they are commonly used in the major population group, are only partially known. Many common facts are unknown by the child, he has little ability to socialize. But, possibly even more important he may have lived his life thus far in a cultural pattern that is limited in scope, limited in its value system, and one from which he has learned as many untruths or half-truths as knowledges that are reasonably true.

Our vast majority of children we accept into schools at age six "where they are", but knowing that much of the knowledge and abilities possessed are reasonably correct or acceptable. Generally we go on from there. With the migrant and the limited-culture child a teacher must secure a reliable estimate of what the child has already learned that is (1) of an acceptable nature (2) of negative or untrue nature, and (3) the complete voids in knowledge, understanding, and abilities to perform that exist in the child.

So, we return to our question about goals for the migrant child's education. What are they? As suggested, some children may achieve - let us call it - social and academic status in the late elementary years. What about the others - both those who will be able to continue schooling, and those who drop out all along the line? Have we established intermediate goals to be accomplished all along the way for their education? When one stops schooling, let us say, after an inequivalent four grades what can be the expectancy of preparation within the child? Do we know? Yes, our response is that he should know so much about use of words, about spelling, about reading, writing, arithmetic.

Just whoa here a moment! We are not making sense to me. Suppose we agree here to agree that there has been a fourth grade equivalency mastery. I ask, most seriously, how about the half truths this boy started with, is he still possessed of colloquial biases that limit his readiness to free and broader understanding? Has he achieved ability to interrelate with other people? With people outside of his group as well as those within his limited peer group? Has he achieved any awareness of his restrictive cultural pattern? Has he learned the meaning of "value"? Is dirt on his person, on his food, on his clothing still of no significance to him?

I trust the point is made. The educative process must aid this child to live a fuller life in relation to his potential and do it in broader and less restrictive patterns of cultural expectancies. In our competitive society he must know how to respond to expectancies of people if he is to achieve status in vocation or any part of life.

So, the question of what is to be achieved, necessitates answer to both the questions: What knowledges are being presented to him for

his mastery? And, how shall learning by the child be aided in the school environment?

Here, we must attempt an answer to the assignment for this meeting, to get at this second question which relates to the practices which constitute the design for learning. What are some promising practices for producing learning situations in the school for migrant children? Note, my emphasis makes the learning the important objective. I suggest that perhaps too often we overemphasize the "teaching". Teaching is only a tool to be used in improvement of the learning process. Should not the supremely important emphasis be placed upon how children "learn to learn"?

I have suggested that our academic discipline knowledges are essential in the achievement of complete selfhood. But, I suggest that areas of knowledge related to comprehension of culturally inspired responses must also have a more prominent place in the primary, intermediate, and elementary levels of education for many of our children.

If we may accept that - civilization is man-made things - society is people - and culture is the interaction between people, then carry the thought on through this question: --- Can we accept that knowledges about civilization, plus knowledges about people, must be augmented by knowledge and abilities concerning our responses and decisions in interrelations with people? If knowledge and ability in interrelationship are necessary then we know that provision for their learning must be included in the educative process. This may be a mouthful of thought but acceptance of this proposition will lead us to consideration of suggestions for improving practices in the difficult work of learning - the work that leads each child onward toward achieving the competencies

that will allow fulfillment of complete selfhood in a democratic society.

In Colorado experiences with migrant education, we find that the children do not have a readiness for using all the modern technical aids and tools designed to make learning easier or quicker. The teacher is still the queen of all learning aids. To us in migrant education this master teacher is fully and completely skilled in knowledge and ability to discern in the child what he does and does not possess, and also what he possesses that might best be unpossessed.

The teacher analyzes the potential of the child. You say, what about using standardized testing and measurement instruments? Suppose there are none that can discount the cultural deprivation or the semantic inability of the child? And - as yet - these tools are insufficiently reliable though Dr. Manuel of the University of Texas, and others, are striving valiantly to produce reliable instruments. The master teacher may arrive at a reasonably accurate estimate of the child's potential, and his achievement, through observing his performance - by testing him merely through his associations with her and with other children. The teacher's subjectively made estimates must be developed after some pattern, some standards and goals that may be applied at the first grade level, at the fourth grade, and so on.

These objectives must be extended beyond our present acceptance of academic disciplines into the areas that relate to cultural expectancies and the abilities to respond adequately in human interrelationships. This is the area where help is needed now by all teachers. For example, where can you find a complete, useful teacher guide listing the common American culture patterns? This^{is} an area of real challenge to those who

influence and create the shape of American education.

What within-school practices best promote this kind of learning, ability, and will?

A practice of first importance is to assign fewer pupils to the teacher. We have found that fifteen is an optimum number. This truly allows for individualization in the education process.

The teacher must be fully competent in all subjects within a range of at least two grades above and below the assigned grade. There must be continuing and instant readiness to aid learning in any subject at any level without reference to short-term lesson plans that are designed upon an expectancy of equal rate of learning by everyone within the class group. Please, do not misinterpret this statement. The intended meaning here suggests a complete pre-preparation of the sequence of curriculum that competence in the tool knowledges shall be achieved. It should be rich for every level of individual capability and should provide for the expansion of children's knowledges and abilities in a systematic order. For clarification of this point I refer you to the Amidon plan for sequence in elementary education.

The classroom teacher, at least through primary and intermediate levels, is the very heart of school life for her children. Achieving and maintaining a school world of familiarity is important for this child. Ultimately, associations should be broadened to promote competency in relating to other adults. Total departmentalization is to be avoided - at least into seventh grade. Some educators might disagree with this view, but we believe that academic excellence in depth during the earlier school years of these children is of less importance than aiding

them to achieve the qualities and abilities that will motivate them to stay in the learning situation. They will never have the opportunity to achieve excellence if they are not prepared and aided in developing the will to continue education. All this suggests a self-contained classroom - or at most one with slight modifications.

A third practice attended with eminent success let us call simply experiential learning. Children with limited backgrounds have limited bases for vicarious learning. They have little difficulty in learning to know the meaning of the word "apple" if an apple is shown to them. Attempting to explain less tangible matters to these children with words alone is often fruitless. For example, to many of the primary-age children the meaning of "up", "down", "sideways" cannot be comprehended except through demonstration. And this demonstration they, themselves, should actively participate in. Experiencing may be incorporated into the learning process in many ways - many types of field trips can be used effectively. The purposiveness of each experience in terms of learning should be carefully thought out by the teacher. Factual knowledges and relationships should not be left for chance perception and understanding by the pupil. The effective teacher will place focus upon these to aid the learner in learning. Then, each experience relationship planned well enough to assure a lasting understanding on the part of the pupil of the particular knowledges that have been selected for emphasis. Some teachers might reflect "well, if you select just certain concentrations about a trip to a dairy, how about the child securing an understanding of the total process?"

The response here suggests another instructional practice. With limited background children never assume that they understand just

because none says "no" to the teacher's question "Does everyone understand?" Until the child demonstrates understanding assume that he does not understand. Because migrant children ride over large geographic areas in a truck or a car does not say they know anything about the country passed through. Generally they have seen the country with their eyes - but the features have not been seen with the intellect. When the mind is unopened there can be no assumption that learning has been achieved.

So much more could be said but time already has walked past itself.

What has been suggested?

Given - the learner with potential - the goals to be achieved - a teacher skilled in the total arts and discernment capabilities required in superior teaching, there remains to be made decision about the means for achieving the learning and growth aspired to. These means may be thought of as the professional, technical tools of the educative process. They must consider the primary importance of the methods of learning. They must give due consideration to the accomplishment of knowledge, of the ability to understanding, and the will to use these abilities for individual adjustment to all circumstances of life.

We maintain that study of traditional academic facts and ideas alone are not a sufficient preparation for children to live their current lives or to serve them fully in youth and in their adult lives that will be lived in the future. To the knowledge that is meaningful in today's world must be added means for development of ability within the individual to creative approach, analytical thinking, and the solving of problems that he recognizes, can describe, can analyze, and can place in

a perspective of importance related to the future society, and the culture of the future, in which that child will be living. The child must learn the abilities that will permit him to fulfill his own and the expectations of society.

Please do not totally agree - or totally disagree - with what I have said. If the remarks provoke you to deeper consideration of the matter of instructional practices something, surely, will have been achieved. As the farm hand said, the buggy, the harness, and the horse have learned what, in actuality, is the objective of education, and will aid the teacher in aiding all of her children to reach that objective!